

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, UK

SUBJECT: NORTH SEA OIL

REF: LONDON 398

1. IN COURSE OF REVIEW OF NORTH SEA OIL QUESTIONS
YESTERDAY (REFTEL), SIR JACK RAMPTON, PERMANENT SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, TOLD ECON/COM MIN HE THINKS IT
WOULD BE USEFUL IF HE WERE ABLE TO VISIT THE U.S. FOR
THREE OR FOUR DAYS IN ORDER TO HAVE FACE TO FACE CON-
TACTS WITH TOP LEVEL MANagements OF U.S. OIL COMPANIES
ENGAGED IN NORTH SEA OIL DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO CLARIFY
UKG PLANS AND OBJECTIVES, NOTABLY AS THEY RELATE TO
PETROLEUM TAX AND PARTICIPATION. RAMPTON, WHO IS IN A
KEY POSITION ON THESE QUESTIONS, SAID HE HAS HAD SOME
CONTACTS WITH VISITING HIGH LEVEL AMERICAN OIL OFFICIALS,
BUT THESE ARE USUALLY BRIEF AND RATHER CEREMONIAL AND DO
NOT GET DOWN TO REAL IN-DEPTH EXCHANGE. HE ALSO OF
COURSE HAS HAD MANY CONTACTS WITH LOCAL U.S. OIL COMPANY
REPS, BUT FEELS THESE MEETINGS TOO LEAVE SOME GAP IN
COMPLETE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

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2. THIS WAS ENTIRELY RAMPTON'S INITIATIVE. WHEN WE SAID

WE WOULD EXPLORE THE MATTER, I.E., SEE IF THE COMPANIES WOULD BE INTERESTED IN INVITING HIM, HE RETREATED A STEP BY SAYING HE WOULD BE GLAD TO CONSIDER SUCH A VISIT, BUT WE HAVE NO DOUBT HE WOULD GO IF INVITED, ASSUMING A SATISFACTORY TIME COULD BE ARRANGED AND ASSUMING NO OBJECTION BY HIS SUPERIORS.

3. COMMENT AND ACTION REQUESTED: WE THINK SUCH A VISIT COULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL AND, IF DEPARTMENT AGREES, SUGGEST IT BE EXPLORED WITH OIL COMPANIES. AMONG THESE WE SUGGEST STARTING WITH EXXON, MOBIL, TEXACO AND CONOCO, ALL HEADQUARTERED IN NEW YORK AREA. IF DEPARTMENT AND COMPANIES ARE RECEPTIVE, HOWEVER, WE WOULD WISH TO ASK RAMPTON IF THERE ARE OTHER COMPANY HEADQUARTERS OUTSIDE NEW YORK HE WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE. IF VISIT ARRANGED, DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO WISH TO CONSIDER (A) INVITING RAMPTON TO WASHINGTON AND (B) SUGGESTING APPOINTMENTS WITH APPROPRIATE NEW YORK BANKS SUCH AS CHASE MANHATTAN, MORGAN GUARANTY AND FNCB.

SPIERS.

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